reports from concerned police authorities, discrepancies in documents submitted by applicants, lack of response from applicants who are asked to submit additional documents etc. In fact, in majority of cases, the Passport Office, Hyderabad has been processing applications and issuing passports within a period of 40 days.

(d) Does not arise.

Smuggling of Arms and Ammunition into the Country

359. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large quantity of arms, ammunition and explosives have been smuggled into the country recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the concrete steps being taken by Government into the matter and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) and (b) Recently there have been instances wherein arms, ammunitions and explosives were smuggled into the country. Available information with regard to seizure of arms etc. is giving in the Annexure *[See Appendix 178, Annexure No. 16].*

(c) Government is alive to the situation and are taking appropriate steps in this regard. State Governments have been asked to appoint nodal officers for coordinating all actions for carrying out reinforced surveillance. Other steps include gearing up of intellgence machinery, stricter enforcement of existing regulations and a close coordination between the concerned Central and state agencies.

Terminal Benefits to the Employees of National Textile Corporation in Gujarat

360. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that the employees of NTC mills in Gujarat are yet to get then-terminal benefits after their superannuation;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) by when these employees are likely to get their dues;

(d) whether Government have framed any guidelines in this regard in order to mitigate their hardships; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for not following the guidelines?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) On account of acute shortage of working capital requirements, NTC has been able to pay only net wages to the workers/ employees of NTC mills in Gujarat. As a result, there has been some default in payment of post retirement dues to the superannuated employees of NTC towards PF & ESI. An amount of Rs. 43.21 lakhs is outstanding to the superannuated employees of NTC (Gujarat) to-wards PF & ESI dues.

(c) to (e) On account of net worth erosion of 8 out of 9 subsidiaries of NTC, these 8 subsidiary corporations including NTC (Gujarat) Ltd. have been referred to and declared sick by the BIFR. Government have approved a revised Turn Around Plan for NTC mills in Gujarat involving modernisation of six out of eleven mills and restructuring of 5 unviable mills into 3 viable units by merger. This plan involve an outlay of Rs. 158.25 crores. The funds will be generated out of sale of surplus lands and assets of NTC mills. Pending approval of the rehabilitation plan by BIFR and its implementation, Government are meeting the shortfall faced by NTC towards payment of wages and salaries. Once the BIFR approves the rehabilitation plan for NTC (Guj.) and funds become available, it is expected that NTC (Guj.) will be able to clear all oustanding terminal dues of the superannuated employees of its mills. In the meanwhile, the company is

making efforts to clear the dues as far as possible.

Opening of Post and Telegraph Offices in the Villages of Gujarat

361. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in Gujarat where there is no post and telegraph offices at present;

(b) whether the State Government has submitted any proposal in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time likely to be taken by Government in providing at least one post and telegraph office in each village of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VER-MA): (a) 9949 villages in Gujarat do not have post offices at present and 16,914 do not have Telegraph Office.

(b) and (c) Proposals have been submitted by the State Government for post offices in village Dediyasan, Mehsana District, and in village Nana, Sabarkant-ha District. There is no proposal for the Telegraph office.

(d) There is no specific plan to provide Post and Telegraph Offices in each village of Gujarat at present. Post Offices are opened subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms relating to distance, population, income and depending upon the availability of resources.

पाकिस्तान द्वारा भारत को सर्वाधिक वरीयता प्राप्त राष्ट्र का दर्जा

362. श्रीमती यालती शर्मा: क्या विदेशी मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार को ऐसे कोई संकेत मिले हैं कि पाकिस्तान भारत को सर्वाधिक वरीयता प्राप्त राष्ट्र का दर्जा दे सकता है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) इस संबंध में सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल): (क) से (ग) पाकिस्तान ने भारत को एम० एफ० एन० दर्जा प्रदान नहीं किया है तथा 573 मदों की सूची में से आयात की अनुमति देता है।

सरकार ने भारत को एम० एफ० एन० दर्जा प्रदान किए जाने का मसला पाकिस्तान के साथ अनेक मौकों पर तथा विभिन्न स्तरों पर उठाया है। पाकिस्तान के औपचारिक जवाब की प्रतीक्षा है।

IIT Study on Transport Problem of Delhi

363. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report published in the Times of India dated May 6, 1996 captioned 'IIT study promises to bail Delhi out of its transport problem'; and

(b) whether Government have examined the proposals, if so, the details thereof and the decisions taken thereson?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Transport Department of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi has set up a task force to examine the proposals made in the 'IIT Study'.

वस्त्रों के संबंध में भारत-अमरीका समझौता

364. श्री गोपालसिंह जी० सोलंकी: क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या भारत और अमरीका ने वस्त्रों तथा सिले सिलाये परिधानों के संबंध में वर्ष 1994 के दौरान किसी नये द्विपक्षीय समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किये थे;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसकी मुख्य-मुख्य बातें क्या हैं;

(ग) अमरीका में इस समय किन-किन भारतीय वस्त्रों तथा परिधानों की विशेष मांग है;